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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 002990

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SUBJECT: GOC LAYS OUT THEIR PREFERENCES FOR PRESIDENTIAL VISIT

Classified By: AMB PAUL CELLUCCI, REASON: 1.4(B) & (D)

11. (C) Summary - Canada would welcome a January visit by President Bush to set a tone of partnership for the next four years, according to Alex Himelfarb and Tim Murphy, the Prime Minister's top aides. They would like to use the visit to emphasize Canada's commitment to North American security in general, to address if possible beef and any of the other trade irritants, to underscore our cooperation on a range of international issues, such as Haiti and Afghanistan, and then finally to launch a Beyond Smart Borders initiative. End Summary

12. (C) On November 8, 2004, Ambassador Cellucci hosted Alex Himelfarb, Clerk of the Privy Council and Tim Murphy, Chief of Staff, Prime Minister's Office representing both the civil service and political arms of Canada's executive branch. The two had requested the meeting to discuss initial thinking on the invitation to President Bush to visit and, connected to that, their plans on the current hot topic of Canada's participation in missile defense.

13. (C) Missile defense) The government has gotten itself into accepting that there will be a vote in parliament on whether and/or how Canada will participate in missile defense beyond the decision last August to place the early warning component under NORAD. Himelfarb explained that the minority government is not sure it has the numbers to win such a vote, explaining that the Conservative support is not guaranteed as they are concerned about their share of the urban vote in a future election. With his own party split, Himelfarb explained they would prefer to hold no timetable for a Canadian decision. With an invitation to the President to visit, they would commit publicly to the broad agenda of North American security and give private assurances on missile defense, but that vote pending the political reality.

14. (C) Presidential visit) A January timing for the visit would better suit the Canadians, to allow more time to prepare and to hold the visit while Parliament is not in session, thereby precluding a speech before Parliament which has its uncontrollables. Himelfarb laid out components to the visit:

- a. Tone) Setting a tone of partnership for the coming four years.
- b. North American security) Committing to the broad range of security in North America, including NORAD renewal, border security enhancement, law enforcement cooperation and with a possible Great Lakes security component.
- c. NAI by any other name) Launching a next phase of integration facilitating trade and enhancing security. Calling it Beyond Smart Borders, we can address the package of issues discussed under NAI, but without the name. Under this would be -- again with deference to language sensitivities) those items which would eliminate the differences which don't matter.
- d. Trade irritants) Demonstrating movement towards resolution of at the very least the beef issue, and if possible any of the other issues of dispute between the two countries.
- e. International, third-country issues - Discussing a broad range of global and international issues where Canada and the U.S. have worked or can work in lock-step: Middle East Peace Process, Haiti, Sudan, Afghanistan, Iran, proliferation, etc.

15. (C) The Ambassador indicated he would seek to get more concrete ideas on the timing of a visit this week and that the Embassy would begin to work on substance of the meetings both with our Washington colleagues and GOC counterparts.

16. (C) Comment) A year after the Prime Minister announced his intention to work more closely and cooperatively with the U.S., this visit represents an opportunity, delayed by elections here and in the U.S., to put in place practical and concrete demonstration of such a relationship. For some time now, the Canadians have been at pains to stress how much on a broad range of issues they cooperate with us, despite their decision not to have forces on the ground in Iraq. In addition to all the points above, a Presidential visit would

underline for the Canadians just how important getting it right in Iraq is for the international community, for many years to come. We would welcome their expanding their support so far) ships in the gulf, exchange officers on the ground, \$300 million of reconstruction funding, training of Iraqi law enforcement. End Comment.

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